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## **CVU and Mt. Abe inducted into the League of Innovative Schools**

**MONTPELIER** – Champlain Valley Union High School (CVU) and Mt. Abraham Union Middle/High School (Mt. Abe) have been inducted into the League of Innovative Schools, the Agency of Education announced today.

"Mt. Abe and CVU are great additions to the League. I am proud of Vermont's involvement in this consortium of New England schools who are working together to make our schools more relevant and engaging for students," said Armando Vilaseca, Secretary of Education. "The League is a platform for discussion, idea sharing, and best practices – focusing on making our schools reflective of the needs of our state and our country in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

The League of Innovative Schools is comprised of secondary schools from across the state, and is affiliated with the New England Secondary School Consortium ([NESSC](http://www.nessc.org)). The Consortium includes Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The goal of the League is to encourage innovative strategies, establish a network of best practices that is directly linked to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, and promote greater educational equity and opportunities for all students. League schools will serve as models for local education agencies around the state, helping to shape the future of Vermont public education.

"Congratulations to CVU and Mt. Abe for this well-deserved recognition," said Governor Peter Shumlin. "These schools exemplify how innovative programs can improve education for Vermont students. I believe that we can make our education system the best in the nation by following these strategies statewide, using personalized learning that includes internships, career training opportunities, and college-level coursework to create flexible pathways to graduation for all our students."

CVU has designed an innovative program called GOAL (Go Out and Learn) to promote personalized learning plans (PLPs) that meet the school's graduation requirements. GOAL provides a process for students to design learning tailored to their passions and interests. For students, learning opportunities can happen anywhere and at any time, including at community-based learning sites, career technical centers, and CVU. All credit earned by completing a GOAL plan applies toward graduation requirements. The school has piloted the program with several students this year.

"CVU is very excited to become a part of the League of Innovative Schools," said Sean McMannon, CVU Principal. "As CVU moves toward creating more standards-based learning opportunities for students, the League provides a vast learning community of schools, educators, and ideas to foster creative and rigorous learning for all students."

Mt. Abe has been engaged in a school-wide transformation initiative based on a vision with three components:

- Assessment of proficiency based on standards
- Relevant, engaging, and student centered design
- Multiple timeframes and pathways to graduation

Mt. Abe has created student portfolio development websites for each student which includes guidelines for the competencies and examples of each student's self-selected "best work." These electronic portfolios are also used as the basis for semester exhibitions of competency for parents, teachers, and peers. All students begin personalized planning in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, where they create a PLP that evolves as they learn. In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, they can expand their PLP into a personalized pathway to graduation by demonstrating competency gained through other experiences. Students use high school courses, vocational and technical programs, college courses, virtual learning, independent studies, training programs such as firefighting or emergency medicine, service learning and work to generate evidence of their proficiency.

"We have realized that the traditional education model does not work for all of our students and we are working to design a system that is flexible, engaging, and focused on the skills necessary to be successful after leaving high school," said Andy Kepes, Mt. Abe Principal. "Membership in the League will provide us with opportunities to network with other schools who share our goals."

There are currently thirteen members in Vermont's League of Innovative Schools:

- [Bellows Free Academy - St. Albans \(BFA – St. Albans\)](#)
- [Brattleboro Union High School \(BUHS\)](#)
- [Burlington High School \(BHS\)](#)
- [Cabot School](#)
- [Champlain Valley Union High School \(CVU\)](#)
- [Essex High School](#)
- [Montpelier High School](#)
- [Mount Abraham Union Middle/High School \(Mt. Abe\)](#)
- [Rochester High School](#)
- [South Burlington High School](#)
- [U-32](#)
- [Vergennes Union High School \(VUHS\)](#)
- [Williamstown Middle/High School](#)

For more information about the [League of Innovative Schools](#) and the [New England Secondary Schools Consortium](#) (NESSC), please contact Tom Alderman at (802) 828-3134 / [tom.alderman@state.vt.us](mailto:tom.alderman@state.vt.us) or Meg Powden at (802) 828-0262 / [meg.powden@state.vt.us](mailto:meg.powden@state.vt.us).

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